RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

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2006 Census Housing Series: Issue 16
A Profile of Condominiums in Canada, 1981-2006

INTRODUCTION

Condominiums are an increasingly popular housing choice in Canada. From 1981 to 2006, the number of owner-occupied condominiums increased more than five-fold, and the total number of condominiums surpassed one million units.

This *Research Highlight* describes growth in the number of condominiums from 1981 to 2006 and reviews the market share of condominiums in different communities across Canada. It compares the demographic and household characteristics of condominium owners and other homeowners and examines condominium ownership trajectories of different generations. It also reviews factors that might account for the popularity of condominiums, focusing on ease of upkeep and cost differences relative to other owner-occupied dwellings.

About condominiums

The term "condominium" refers to a form of legal ownership, also known as strata in British Columbia and syndicates of co-ownership in Quebec. Condominiums consist of two parts. The first is a collection of private dwelling units, each owned by and registered in the name of the purchaser of the unit. The second part consists of common elements (e.g., lobbies, hallways, elevators, recreational facilities, walkways, gardens). The ownership of these common elements is shared among the unit owners, as is the cost of their operation, maintenance and ongoing replacement.

Although the term "condominium" (or "condo") is commonly used to describe condominium apartments, property owned under condominium tenure can be of any structural type.

For more information about condominium ownership, see Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's *Condominium Buyers' Guide* (Ottawa: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation).

Condominium data and related terminology

The Census is the source of most of the condominium data presented in this Highlight. Because the 2006 and earlier Censuses did not identify rented condominium units, the Highlight focuses on owner-occupied condominiums.[1]

The Census does not ask farm operators whether they live in condominiums. In 2006, there were about 94,000 homeowners in Canada who lived on farms they operated. Farm operators are included in the ranks of owners of non-condominium units in most of the estimates presented here. Estimates of shelter costs and dwelling values, however, exclude farm households because the Census does not collect the requisite price and cost data from this group.

Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations

Statistics Canada defines a Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) as an urban area with a total population of at least 100,000 and an urban core population of at least 50,000. This Highlight presents data for the Ottawa and Gatineau components of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA separately.

Census Agglomerations (CAs) are urban areas that are not CMAs and have urban core populations of at least 10,000.

[1] The 2011 National Household Survey, which replaced the long-form Census, did ask renters whether their dwellings were part of a condominium development, but estimates were not available at the time of writing.

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Condominium markets expanded rapidly from 1981 to 2006

From 1981 to 2006, the number of owner-occupied condominiums in Canada increased from 171,000 to 916,000, more than eight times faster than other owner-occupied homes (see Table 1). Condominiums represented 10.8% of the home ownership market in 2006, compared to just 3.3% in 1981.

The decade following the mid-1990s was a time of robust employment growth, rising household incomes, and low mortgage rates, factors that contributed to a surge in home-buying. Between 1996 and 2006, the home ownership rate in Canada rose from 63.6% to 68.4%, more than in the previous 25 years.[2]

Table 1 Occupied Housing Stock by Tenure, Canada, 1981-2006

	All occupied dwellings	Owner-occupied condominiums	Other owner-occupied dwellings[1]	Rented dwellings
1981	8,281,535	171,090	4,970,845	3,139,595
1986	8,991,670	234,520	5,346,355	3,368,485
1991	10,018,265	367,765	5,905,265	3,718,525
1996	10,820,050	514,720	6,363,060	3,905,145
2001	11,562,975	670,530	6,939,860	3,907,170
2006	12,437,470	915,725	7,594,055	3,878,500
		Growth (%)		
1981-1986	8.6	37.1	7.6	7.3
1986-1991	11.4	56.8	10.5	10.4
1991-1996	8.0	40.0	7.8	5.0
1996-2001	6.9	30.3	9.1	0.1
2001-2006	7.6	36.6	9.4	-0.7
1981-2006	**50.2**	**435.2**	**52.8**	**23.5**

[1] Includes farm households.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

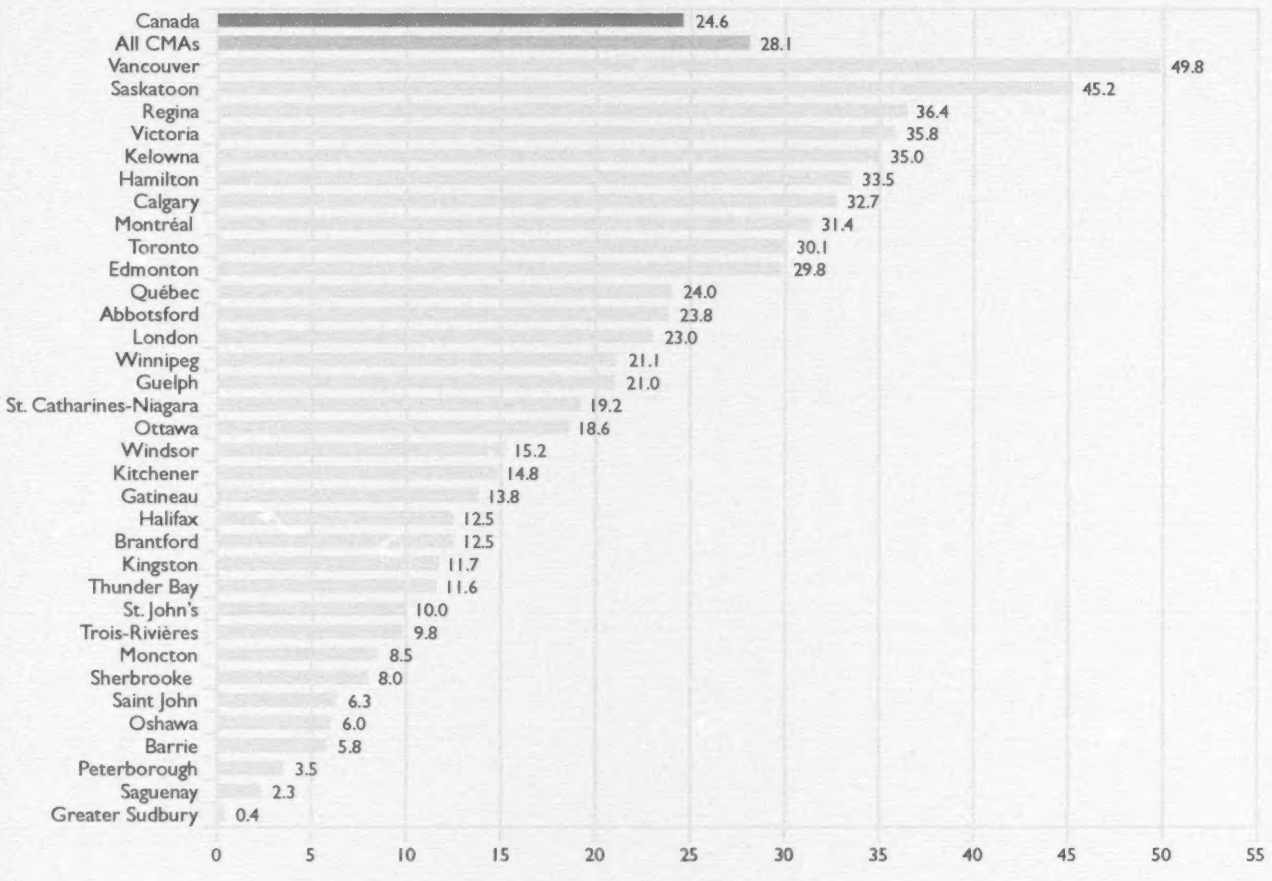
[2] From 1971 to 1996, the national home ownership rate rose from 60.3% to 63.6%.

Condominiums accounted for a disproportionately large share of the growth in home ownership during this period. The number of owner-occupied condominiums grew by just over 400,000 units nationally, 25% of the 1.6 million total increase in owner-occupied dwellings. In many CMAs, growth in the condominium stock represented upwards of 30% of the total increase in owner-occupied dwellings, with shares reaching 50% in Vancouver and 45% in Saskatoon (see Figure 1).

Primary household maintainers

In census data, the primary household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments such as the rent or mortgage. In households with more than one maintainer, the primary maintainer is the first person listed as a maintainer.

In this Highlight, age, when applied to owners of condominiums or owners of other dwellings, refers to the age of the primary household maintainer. Senior maintainers are 65 years or older.



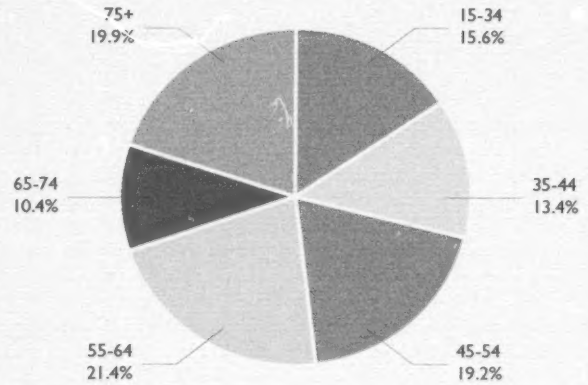
Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 1 Condominium Share of Growth in Home Ownership, Canada and CMAs, 1996-2006

Population aging[3] was not the major factor behind recent condominium growth

The number of condominium owners rose in every age group from 1996 to 2006. All ages contributed to the growth in condominiums (see Figure 2), with no single group dominating, evidence of the broad appeal of condominiums. Senior households accounted for about 30% of the total growth.

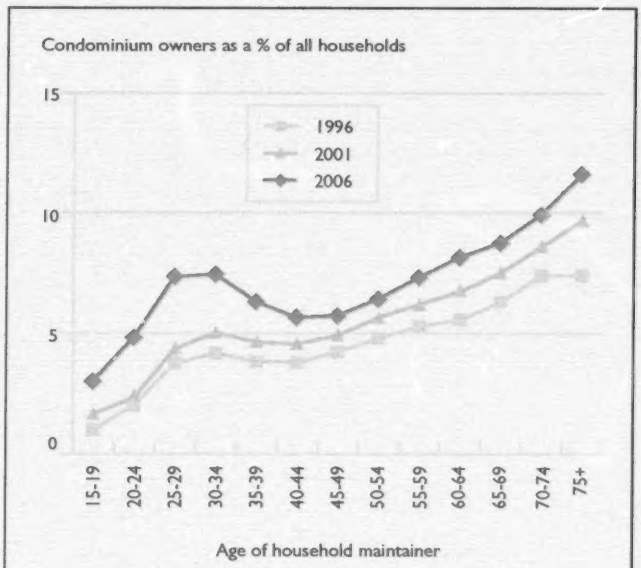
Although senior households have higher rates of condominium ownership than other age groups (see Figure 3), the growing appeal of condominiums to all ages, not the aging of baby boomers, was the main driver of condominium growth from 1996 to 2006.



A household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments such as the rent or mortgage. Where more than one person in a household claims responsibility for such payments, the primary maintainer is the first person listed on the census form as a maintainer.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 2 Share of Total Growth in Owner-occupied Condominiums by Age of Household Maintainer, Canada, 1996-2006



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Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 3 Condominium Ownership Rates by Age of Primary Household Maintainer, Canada, 1996, 2001, and 2006

Condominium ownership rates rose in every age group between 1996 and 2001 and again between 2001 and 2006. Had these rates remained at their 1996 levels instead of rising, the growth in owner-occupied condominiums from 1996 to 2006 would have been less than a quarter of what actually took place. Thus, the increased popularity of condominiums at all ages accounted for more than three-quarters of condominium growth, demographic factors (including aging) for less than a quarter.

[3] Population aging refers to a shift over time in the age distribution of a population towards older age groups. From 1996 to 2006, the median age of Canada's population rose from 35.2 to 38.9 years. Population aging can be the result of declining birth rates, increasing life expectancy, or a combination of the two. In Canada, the oldest baby boomers, the large generation born in the two decades following World War II, are now senior citizens.

Changes in condominium and non-condominium ownership rates

From 1996 to 2006, condominium and non-condominium ownership rates rose in many age groups (especially below the age of 45), a reflection of the general boom in home-buying during the period. In contrast, households with maintainers between the ages of 45 and 64 were less likely to own non-condominium dwellings in 2006 than in 1996 (see Appendix Table 1). For example, the non-condominium ownership rate of households with maintainers aged 60 to 64 decreased from 70.6% in 1996 to 69.4% in 2006, while the rate of condominium ownership for this age group increased substantially from 5.6% to 8.1%. The rate of non-condominium ownership was unchanged for households with maintainers aged 65 to 69 and rose moderately at older ages.

The total condominium stock exceeded one million units in 2006

Because they do not include rented units, estimates of the number of owner-occupied condominiums derived from the Census understate the true size of the condominium stock. In the seven Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) where CMHC surveyed the secondary rental market in 2006, there were about 90,000 rented condominiums (see Table 2).[4] The percentage of condominiums that were rented ranged from under 10% in the province of Quebec to over 20% in Toronto and Vancouver.

The number of rented condominiums in Canada was probably over 100,000.[5] Combined with the 900,000 owner-occupied condominiums counted by the Census, that figure implies that the total number of condominium units, rented plus owner-occupied, was between 1 and 1.1 million in 2006.

Table 2 Rented Condominiums, Selected CMAs, 2006 and 2011

	Rented condominium apartments		% of condominium apartments rented		Average two-bedroom rents—condominiums ($)		Average two-bedroom rents—other apartments[1] ($)	
	2006	2011	2006	2011	2006	2011	2006	2011
Québec	1,547	1,470	8.5	6.3	844	907	637	718
Montréal	6,893	10,744	8.4	9.3	970	1,075	636	719
Ottawa[2]	3,340	5,048	17.1	19.3	1,048	1,235	941	1,086
Toronto	41,749	59,854	20.4	22.2	1,487	1,608	1,067	1,149
Calgary	4,704	11,106	17.6	26.2	1,257	1,460	960	1,084
Edmonton	3,974	11,733	17.8	28.5	908	1,164	808	1,034
Vancouver	28,567	44,804	21.9	25.7	1,273	1,663	1,045	1,237

[1] Apartments in purpose-built rental buildings with at least three units.
[2] Excludes Gatineau.

Source: CMHC (Secondary Rental Market Survey, Rental Market Survey)

[4] In 2006, CMHC's Secondary Rental Market Survey began collecting information about condominium rentals in selected CMAs.

[5] The seven CMAs included in CMHC's Secondary Rental Market Survey accounted for 72% of all owner-occupied condominiums in Canada in 2006. If they accounted for a similar percentage of condominium rentals, the total number of rented condominiums in Canada would have been around 125,000.

Strong growth in condominiums continued in recent years and the percentage of rented condominiums rose

By 2011, the condominium stock may have exceeded 1.3 million units. There were about 275,000 housing starts intended for the condominium market from mid-year 2006 through mid-year 2011, 10% more than in the previous five years, an indication that condominium demand remained strong. The percentage of housing starts intended for the condominium market rose over the past decade (see Figure 4).

Some of the recent demand for condominiums came from investors looking to rent out their purchases. From 2006 to 2011, the percentage of condominiums occupied by renters rose in six of the seven CMAs surveyed (see Table 2). Rents charged for condominiums were on average more expensive than those for conventional rental apartments[6]. Though estimates of condominium rentals are not available prior to 2006, the number of rented units almost certainly increased from 1981 to 2006, if the strong expansion of the owner-occupied condominium stock is any indication. Any growth in condominium rentals after 1996 would have contributed to supply, albeit at the high end of the market, at a time when growth in the total rental supply had come to a standstill (see Table 1).

Condominium market shares are highest in British Columbia

Condominiums are found principally in large urban areas, where land costs tend to be high and multiple-unit buildings relatively common. Home to 65% of all households in Canada, CMAs accounted for 90% of owner-occupied condominiums in 2006. Condominiums were underrepresented elsewhere: 7% in medium-sized centres (Census Agglomerations) and 3% in small towns and rural areas, home respectively to 14% and 22% of households in Canada.[7]

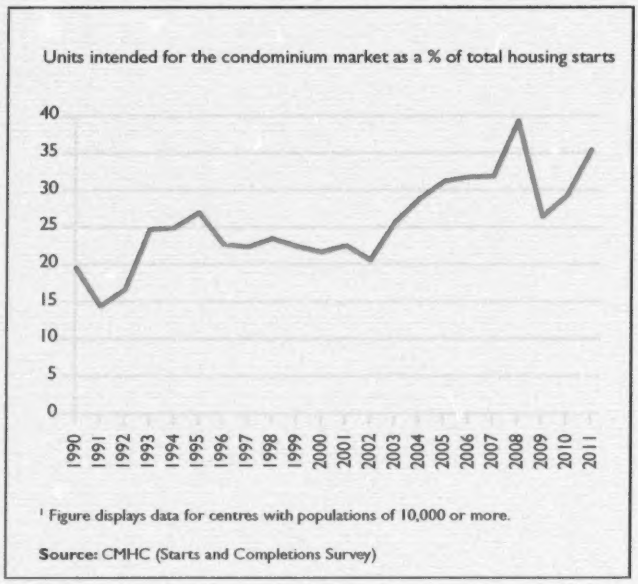


Figure 4 Condominium Share of Total Housing Starts, Canada[1], 1990-2011

In Vancouver, the most expensive housing market in Canada, condominiums made up 31% of the owner-occupied housing stock in 2006, the highest market share by far in any CMA (see Table 3).[8] Condominiums accounted for higher shares of the home ownership market in each of the four CMAs in British Columbia than in other metropolitan areas.

Market shares also exceeded the CMA average in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Ottawa (excluding Gatineau), large communities with relatively high housing prices. Together, these four CMAs and the four in British Columbia accounted for 62% of all owner-occupied condominiums in Canada in 2006.

Market shares for condominiums were relatively low in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and Northern Ontario.

[6] Conventional rental apartments comprise units in purpose-built rental buildings of three units or more.

[7] Small towns and rural areas comprise places that are not CMAs or CAs. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

[8] In 2011, the average MLS® price in Vancouver was $779,000. At $498,000, Victoria had the second highest average price. MLS® is a registered trademark of the Canadian Real Estate Association.

Table 3 Owner-occupied Condominiums, Canada and CMAs, 1996-2006

	Owner-occupied condominiums			Growth (%)	Condominium share[1] of home ownership market (%)		
	1996	2001	2006	1996-2006	1996	2001	2006
Canada	**514,720**	**670,530**	**915,725**	**77.9**	**7.5**	**8.8**	**10.8**
All CMAs	**465,645**	**604,150**	**827,685**	**77.8**	**11.1**	**12.7**	**15.1**
Vancouver	104,625	127,610	164,600	57.3	25.4	27.6	31.0
Abbotsford	7,795	8,355	9,640	23.7	23.4	23.0	23.4
Kelowna	6,820	8,505	11,350	66.4	17.6	19.3	21.9
Victoria	14,750	16,125	19,670	33.4	18.3	18.8	20.9
Toronto	122,025	166,550	226,640	85.7	14.0	16.1	18.6
Calgary	20,020	34,050	55,365	176.5	10.0	13.5	18.0
Edmonton	22,720	29,620	44,940	97.8	11.0	12.5	16.0
Ottawa	25,470	28,860	35,350	38.8	15.1	15.0	15.9
Hamilton	13,790	19,465	26,235	90.2	9.0	11.3	13.7
Saskatoon	3,245	5,620	8,555	163.6	6.2	9.7	13.4
Montréal	56,930	71,610	108,510	90.6	8.8	10.1	13.3
Guelph	2,305	3,315	4,510	95.7	9.5	11.0	13.0
London	8,895	12,090	15,405	73.2	9.5	11.1	12.6
Québec	12,195	14,270	20,385	67.2	8.1	8.7	11.0
Regina	2,565	3,130	5,105	99.0	5.2	6.0	9.1
Kitchener	6,160	8,775	10,655	73.0	7.0	8.6	9.0
Winnipeg	8,805	11,560	13,425	52.5	5.3	6.5	7.1
Gatineau	2,540	3,175	5,325	109.6	4.4	4.9	6.8
Halifax	3,725	4,495	6,595	77.0	4.9	5.0	6.6
Windsor	2,795	4,420	5,980	114.0	3.8	5.2	6.4
Kingston	1,655	2,140	2,620	58.3	4.9	5.7	6.3
Brantford	950	1,260	2,200	131.6	3.8	5.6	6.2
St. Catharines-Niagara	3,550	4,785	6,340	78.6	3.5	4.3	5.4
Barrie	1,510	1,775	2,755	82.5	5.0	4.4	5.3
Oshawa	3,315	4,300	4,900	47.8	5.0	5.5	5.2
Sherbrooke	1,205	1,365	2,305	91.3	3.9	4.0	5.2
Thunder Bay	830	1,105	1,225	47.6	2.4	3.1	3.3
Trois-Rivières	695	925	1,165	67.6	2.2	2.7	3.2
Moncton	570	770	1,135	99.1	1.9	2.4	3.1
St. John's	555	1,195	1,545	178.4	1.4	2.7	3.1
Peterborough	775	890	1,025	32.3	2.9	3.1	3.0
Saint John	725	915	950	31.0	2.4	2.8	2.8
Saguenay	765	755	865	13.1	2.1	1.9	2.1
Greater Sudbury	380	370	400	5.3	1.0	0.9	0.9

[1] Owner-occupied condominiums as a % of all owner households.
Metropolitan areas ranked by condominium market share in 2006.

Source: Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Condominium market shares expanded in nearly all Census Metropolitan Areas from 1996 to 2006

In CMAs as a group, condominiums accounted for 15.1% of all owner-occupied homes in 2006, compared to 11.1% in 1996. The number of owner-occupied condominiums rose in all CMAs, with condominiums accounting for an increasing share of owner-occupied homes in all but three—Greater Sudbury, Saguenay, and Abbotsford (see Table 3). While growth was generally robust in places with large condominium markets, many of the CMAs with the strongest condominium growth in percentage terms were ones in which the number of condominiums was fairly small and market shares relatively low, among them St. John's, Brantford, Windsor, Gatineau, and Moncton.

Market shares are high in resort and retirement areas

Although typically found in metropolitan areas, condominiums have above-average shares of the home ownership market in some mid-sized centres (Census Agglomerations), especially ones that are retirement destinations or resort locations. Most of these communities are in British Columbia, a province known for attracting retirees, or Alberta (see Figure 5). Collingwood, Ontario, the only community east of Alberta in this group, is a resort and retirement market that has grown rapidly.

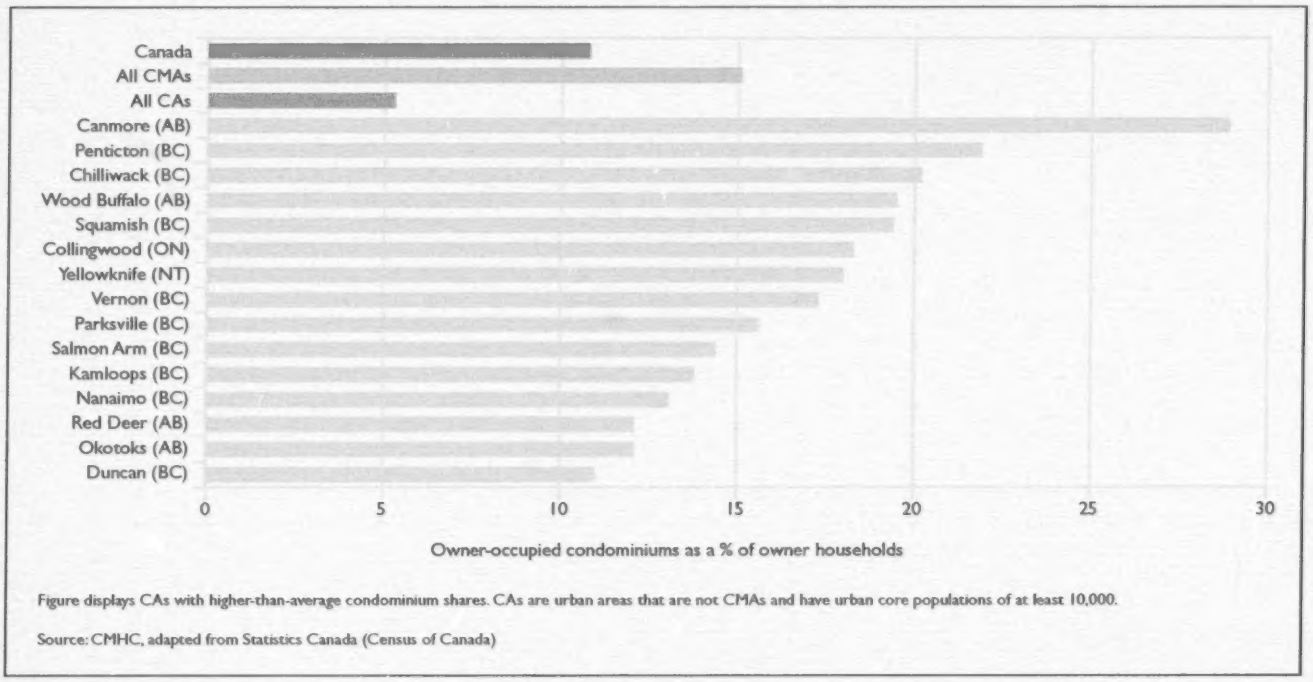


Figure displays CAs with higher-than-average condominium shares. CAs are urban areas that are not CMAs and have urban core populations of at least 10,000.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

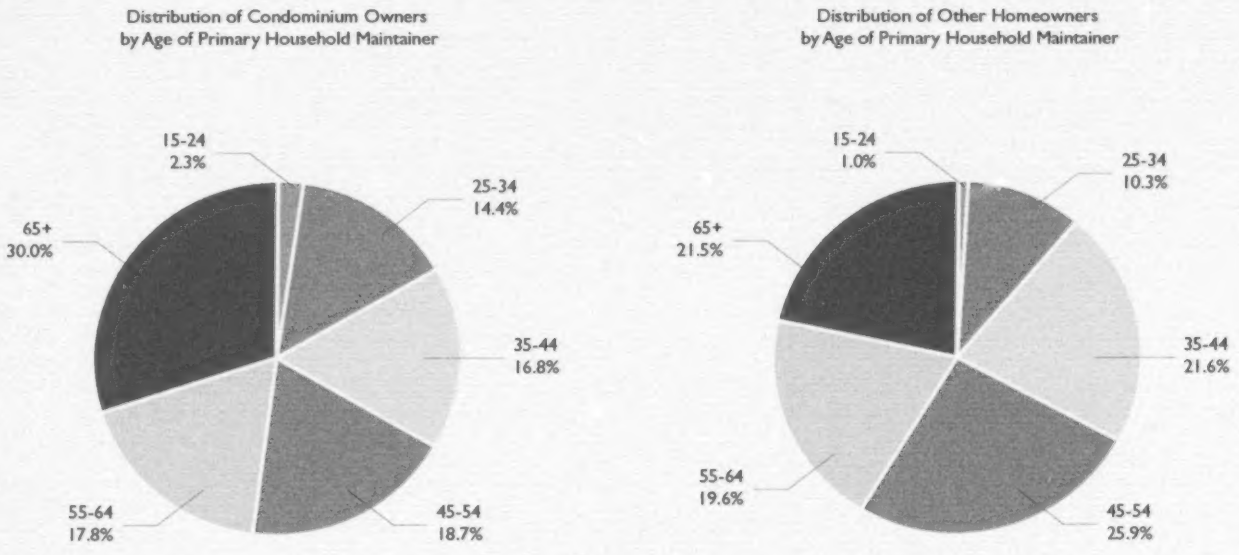
Figure 5 Condominium Shares of Home Ownership Market, Selected Census Agglomerations (CAs), 2006

Condominiums are popular with seniors and young adults

Seniors and young adults account for a disproportionate share of condominium owners when compared to owners of other types of housing. In 2006, 17% of condominium owners in Canada were under the age of 35, compared to 11% of other homeowners, and 30% of condominium owners were 65 or older, compared to 22% of other homeowners (see Figure 6 and Appendix Table 2).

People living alone and couples without children make up the majority of households living in condominiums

The overrepresentation of young adults and seniors among maintainers of households in condominiums is echoed in relatively small household sizes—an average in 2006 of 2.0 persons for households in condominiums, compared to 2.8 for other owner-occupied dwellings (see Appendix Table 2). Couples with children made up only 16% of



[1] Includes farm households.
A household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments such as the rent or mortgage. Where more than one person in a household claims responsibility for such payments, the primary maintainer is the first person listed on the census form as a maintainer.

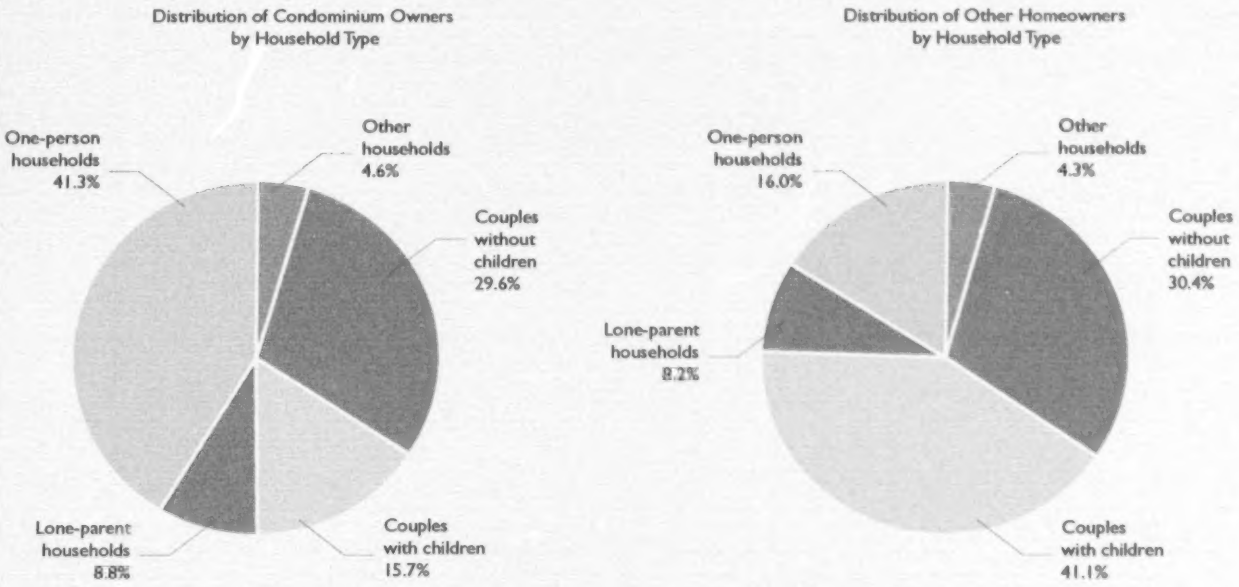
Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 6 Age Composition of Condominium Owners and Other Homeowners[1], Canada, 2006

owner-occupants of condominiums but 41% of other owner households (see Figure 7 and Appendix Table 2). By contrast, 41% of households in owner-occupied condominiums were people who lived alone compared to only 16% of households in other owner-occupied homes. Over 70% of condominium owners were one-person households or couples without children, people less likely than families with children to need or want the large floor areas and backyards associated with traditional suburban homes.

Ease of maintenance and proximity to services appeal to aging households

Condominiums can combine low maintenance with the convenience of living near work and centrally located attractions and services. While ease of upkeep and proximity to services could appeal to any age group—for example, to young people focusing on launching and building their careers—they are apt to be especially attractive to aging households.


Distribution of Condominium Owners by Household Type
One-person households 41.3%
Other households 4.6%
Couples without children 29.6%
Couples with children 15.7%
Lone-parent households 8.8%
Distribution of Other Homeowners by Household Type
One-person households 16.0%
Other households 4.3%
Couples without children 30.4%
Lone-parent households 8.2%
Couples with children 41.1%

[1] Includes farm households.
Other households comprise multi-family households and non-family households of two or more persons. Family households include at least one census family (a couple with or without children or a lone parent) and may include additional members who are not part of the census family.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 7 Household Composition of Condominium Owners and Other Homeowners[1], Canada, 2006

People aged 55 or older are much more likely than younger individuals to cite the desire for a smaller dwelling as a reason for moving (see Table 4).[9] They are also more concerned about living close to facilities and services. In addition, health considerations are increasingly common reasons for moving as people get older—the most frequent reason for moving at ages 75 or more. Condominiums are a logical choice for aging homeowners looking to downsize or to reduce maintenance burdens.

Seniors prefer low-maintenance apartments, especially high-rises, over other condominium types

In 2006, 63% of owner-occupied condominiums were apartments, perhaps the easiest type of housing for occupants to maintain. Apartments have no grounds requiring upkeep, and living space is usually confined to a single floor. For older Canadians therefore, they have the added attraction, at least in buildings equipped with elevators, of minimizing contact with stairs. Problems with vision, frailty, and balance can make climbing stairs a difficult and potentially dangerous activity for aging seniors.[10]

Table 4 Reasons for Moving by Age of Household Maintainer, Canada, 1997-2002

% of movers citing reason								
Reason	Age group of household maintainer							
	<30	30-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Total
Larger dwelling	**19.4**	**25.5**	**17.9**	11.2	5.1	4.4	4.0	**19.6**
Smaller dwelling	2.2	2.1	4.3	**15.3**	**20.4**	**19.6**	**23.9**	5.4
Less expensive dwelling	7.5	7.1	8.9	**14.3**	15.4	8.7	0.0	8.6
Better quality dwelling or neighbourhood	12.9	**15.1**	13.6	13.9	15.6	11.2	**22.5**	**14.2**
Closer to facilities or services	4.9	5.1	4.5	6.0	11.8	9.8	7.2	5.5
Establish own household	**23.2**	13.3	10.5	5.4	7.8	2.1	14.9	13.4
Change from owner to renter or renter to owner	11.6	15.0	**13.7**	10.7	8.0	3.1	8.1	12.9
New job or job transfer	8.6	8.2	10.0	5.0	2.6	0.4	0.0	7.7
Be closer to work	11.6	7.7	5.8	3.7	1.1	0.0	0.0	7.1
Family reasons	**11.9**	**16.0**	**14.0**	**15.4**	**22.0**	**25.5**	18.5	**15.4**
Health reasons	1.1	1.6	3.6	6.0	**16.7**	**33.1**	**42.3**	4.3
Other reasons	10.2	8.3	13.9	15.7	7.0	7.1	4.9	10.3

Bold cells: top 3 reasons given for moving (excluding "other reasons"). Shaded cells: top 5 reasons.
Data describe only the most recent moves of households moving from 1997 to 2002. Percentages do not sum to 100 since households could give more than one reason for moving.
The household maintainer (reference person) is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments, such as the rent or mortgage.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (2002 Survey of Household Spending).

[9] Discussion of reasons for moving is based on data from Statistics Canada's 2002 *Survey of Household Spending*, which collected information about the housing choices of people who moved between 1997 to 2002. Results were previously published in Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *2001 Census Housing Series: Issue 10 Aging, Residential Mobility and Housing Choices*, Research Highlight, Socio-economic Series 06-001 (Ottawa, CMHC, 2006), pp. 4-5.

[10] See *Preventing Falls on Stairs* in the *About Your House* series of fact sheets available on the CMHC website at: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/maho/adse/adse_001.cfm.

Of all condominium residents, seniors are the age segment most likely to live in high-rise apartments, units in buildings of 5 floors or more that would typically have elevators. In 2006, high-rise units made up 41% of the condominiums in Canada owned by those 75 or older (see Table 5). Together, high-rise and low-rise apartments accounted for nearly three-quarters (73%) of the condominiums owned by this group.

Other types of condominiums, such as row and semi-detached houses, though still in the minority, were relatively more popular with maintainers aged 35 to 64 than with seniors or maintainers under the age of 35. These ground-oriented types can combine substantial floor area with access to outdoor space, features that would appeal to families with children.

Condominium prices are lower than the prices of other homes, a reflection of smaller unit sizes

Given the sustained strength of the growth in condominiums, their popularity with young buyers, and their high market shares in expensive CMAs like Vancouver and Toronto, it would be surprising if affordability was not part of their appeal. One reason young people move is to buy their first homes—to switch from renting to owning (see Table 4). For first-time buyers with limited savings, affordability is apt to be a deciding factor in their housing choices.

In 2006, condominium owners in CMAs estimated that their homes would sell for a median price of $201,000, compared to $260,000 for other owner-occupied dwellings (see Table 6).[11] In every CMA, the estimated selling price of condominiums was less than that of other owner-occupied units, with the difference in median prices exceeding $100,000 in Toronto, Ottawa (excluding Gatineau), Calgary, Kelowna, Abbotsford, Vancouver, and Victoria.

Estimated prices of recently built units also showed large differences.[12] In 2006, Kingston was the only CMA with a higher estimated selling price for recently built condominiums than for other new dwellings.

In expensive central locations, reducing the size of condominiums is one way for developers to keep prices down. In 2006, condominiums in Canada had an average of 5.2 rooms compared to 7.5 for other owner-occupied

Table 5 Distribution of Condominium Owner-occupants by Age of Maintainer[1] and Structure Type, Canada, 2006 (%)

	High-rise apartments[2]	Low-rise apartments[3]	Other multiple dwellings[4]	Single-detached and movable dwellings[5]	All types
All ages	31.5	31.0	32.9	4.5	100.0
15-24	26.6	42.2	27.8	3.4	100.0
25-34	31.2	34.5	31.5	2.8	100.0
35-44	29.7	28.1	38.8	3.4	100.0
45-54	26.7	29.8	39.3	4.2	100.0
55-64	28.9	30.5	35.2	5.4	100.0
65-74	34.3	29.8	29.3	6.6	100.0
75+	40.6	32.6	21.7	5.1	100.0

[1] The primary household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments such as the rent or mortgage. In households with more than one maintainer, the primary maintainer is the first person listed as a maintainer.
[2] Apartments in buildings of 5 or more storeys.
[3] Apartments in buildings of less than 5 storeys.
[4] Other multiples comprise semi-detached houses, row houses, duplexes, and single-attached houses.
[5] Movable dwellings comprise mobile homes and other movable dwellings.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

[11] The Census does not collect actual selling prices. Instead, homeowners in 2006 (other than farm operators) were asked "If you were to sell this dwelling now, for how much would you expect to sell it?"

[12] Construction dates in census data are ranges estimated by respondents. Recent construction refers to units built from 2001 to May 16, 2006 (Census Day).

Table 6 Median Dwelling Values[1], Condominiums and Other Owner-occupied Dwellings[2], Canada and CMAs, 2006 ($)

	All occupied stock		Recent construction[3]	
	Condo	Non-Condo	Condo	Non-Condo
Canada	**200,281**	**200,474**	**245,639**	**299,912**
All CMAs	**200,552**	**259,564**	**250,032**	**323,594**
St. John's	119,880	149,688	150,260	183,299
Halifax	160,704	180,197	224,938	250,070
Moncton	119,826	125,325	125,383	179,490
Saint John	100,057	120,244	149,862	180,033
Saguenay	94,802	100,226	114,891	150,404
Québec	129,798	149,582	149,687	199,797
Sherbrooke	129,875	149,606	149,899	200,133
Trois-Rivières	94,938	100,211	114,885	150,314
Montréal	179,924	200,432	199,833	250,676
Gatineau	131,871	174,385	150,234	235,019
Ottawa	174,090	278,919	230,273	301,019
Kingston	150,428	200,594	320,142	259,227
Peterborough	184,802	200,295	268,742	289,511
Oshawa	156,792	250,356	199,749	290,520
Toronto	224,764	360,343	259,908	379,006
Hamilton	190,064	250,769	233,706	340,240
St. Catharines-Niagara	149,680	180,072	225,113	278,791
Kitchener	149,752	239,675	229,381	280,456
Brantford	140,117	200,119	219,369	259,585
Guelph	181,532	259,511	229,453	299,844
London	139,265	190,327	239,631	259,271
Windsor	139,410	174,656	160,542	230,187
Barrie	149,770	248,978	183,548	269,294
Greater Sudbury	129,989	140,022	NA	269,858
Thunder Bay	125,074	129,926	165,117	240,103
Winnipeg	120,358	150,063	200,647	250,599
Regina	133,861	139,983	149,774	245,103
Saskatoon	129,785	160,463	149,932	240,597
Calgary	230,032	349,613	250,384	400,575
Edmonton	160,138	250,383	190,187	300,444
Kelowna	215,028	349,419	299,543	449,737
Abbotsford	179,130	349,981	290,798	449,141
Vancouver	295,252	501,555	349,333	552,907
Victoria	271,850	450,019	348,699	501,059

[1] Values estimated by homeowners (selling prices expected by homeowners if their dwellings were to be sold).
[2] Excludes farm households.
[3] Units built from 2001 to May 16, 2006 (Census Day).

Source: Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

dwellings (see Appendix Table 2).[13] Condominium apartments may be as small as a few hundred square feet.[14] Such compact units provide a relatively affordable form of home ownership, but one with limited appeal to prospective buyers with families. As discussed above, condominiums typically house smaller households than do other owner-occupied dwellings (see Appendix Table 2).

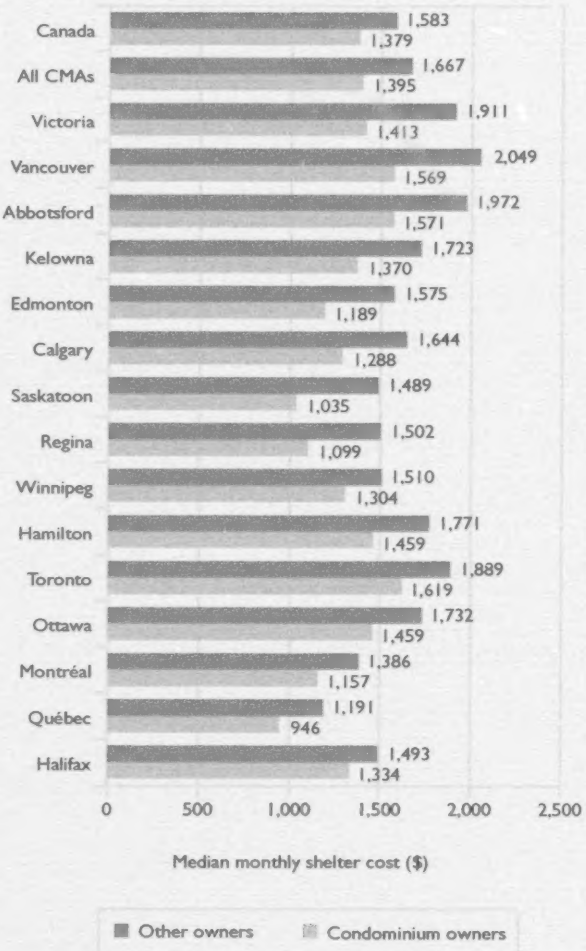
Shelter cost data collected by the Census

Shelter cost data from the Census describe monthly expenditures.[15] For homeowners, such costs comprise mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services. The Census does not collect data on maintenance and repairs.

Since condominium fees are included, the shelter costs of condominium owners reflect at least a portion of what they spend on maintenance and repairs. Condominium fees cover repair and maintenance of common areas and building systems, but do not cover maintenance and repairs made by homeowners to their units.

Condominium buyers with mortgages reported significantly lower monthly shelter costs than other home buyers in 2006

Not surprisingly, given the comparatively low prices of condominiums, condominium buyers who took out mortgages had lower monthly shelter costs in 2006 than other homebuyers with mortgages. In many CMAs, households financing the purchase of recently constructed condominiums had median monthly shelter costs that were up to $500 lower than the costs faced by borrowers financing the purchase of other recently built homes (see Figure 8).[16] Differences were especially pronounced in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. These figures likely



[1] Recent construction refers to units built from 2001 to May 16, 2006 (Census Day).
[2] Excludes farm households.

Source: Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 8 Median Shelter Costs, Recent Construction[1], Condominium Owners and Other Owners[2] with Mortgages, Selected CMAs, 2006

[13] The Census does not collect square footage estimates.

[14] In Vancouver according to one source, "most inner-city condos today are under 600 sq. feet." Emma Teitel, "It's a small world after all," Maclean's, January 16, 2012, p. 28.

[15] For some expenditure categories (e.g., property taxes), annual spending is converted to monthly amounts.

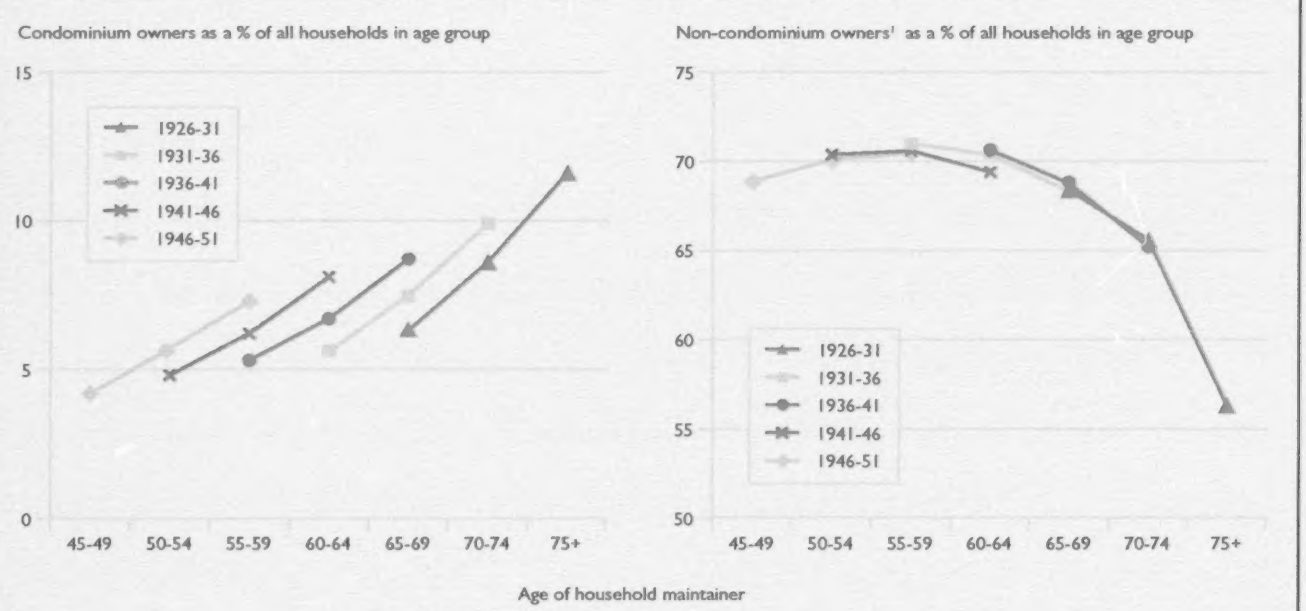
[16] Census data do not provide details on downpayments, loan amounts, mortgage rates, amortization periods, or purchase prices, all of which influence monthly shelter costs. Focusing on recent construction ensures that purchase prices are roughly contemporaneous. Construction dates in census data are ranges estimated by respondents. Here, as in the discussion of estimated selling prices, recent construction refers to units built from 2001 to May 16, 2006 (Census Day).

understate cost differences since a portion of repair and maintenance spending, in the form of condominium fees, is included in the costs of condominium owners but not those of other homeowners (see box on previous page).

All birth cohorts display increasing appetite for condominiums

Canadians were considerably more likely to own and live in condominiums in 2006 than people of comparable age just a decade before. From young to old, successive birth cohorts[17] surpassed previous generations in condominium ownership (see Figure 9 and Appendix Table 1); for example, maintainers aged 65 to 69 in 1996 (born from 1926 to 1931) had a condominium ownership rate of 6.3%, compared to 7.5% for the same age group in 2001 (the 1931-36 cohort), and 8.7% for that age group in 2006 (the 1936-41 cohort).

Cohorts exhibited strong increases in condominium ownership from 1996 to 2006 as maintainers approached and moved into their senior years. In contrast, non-condominium ownership rates leveled off around age 55 and began declining once maintainers reached the age of 60, with the drop becoming progressively more pronounced at older ages. Once cohorts reached their seventies, declines in non-condominium ownership rates were large enough to more than offset increases in condominium ownership rates, the implication being that some households moved from owning to renting.



[1] Includes farm households.
Birth cohorts comprise households whose maintainers were all born during a given period. Each line shows the ownership rate of a given cohort in 1996, 2001, and 2006.
The household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments. Where more than one person in a household claims responsibility for such payments, the primary maintainer is the first person listed on the census form as a maintainer.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 9 Condominium and Non-condominium Ownership Rates by Birth Cohort, Canada, 1996, 2001, and 2006

[17] Birth cohorts comprise individuals born during a given period. Over time, cohorts move through progressively older age groups. The overlap in birth date ranges (e.g., 1931-36, 1936-41) arises because the Census takes place near mid-year. For example, someone who was 69 years old on May 16, 2006 (Census Day) could have been born in 1936 or 1937, and someone who was 70 on that date could have been born in 1935 or 1936. Hence, those aged 65 to 69 on Census Day comprised the 1936-41 cohort and those aged 70 to 74 comprised the 1931-36 cohort.

Condominium market growth could be tempered by lingering attachment to family homes

There is reason to believe that the condominium market will continue to grow. The oldest baby boomers—the large generation born in the two decades following World War II—are just beginning to turn 65. Earlier generations achieved their highest rates of condominium ownership during their senior years (see Figure 9). If baby boomers follow the same pattern, we can expect that many will buy condominiums as they age.

A second factor that will play a role in condominium market growth is the extent to which familiarity with and acceptance of condominiums continue to grow. As we have seen, successive generations displayed an increasing appetite for condominiums over the period from 1996 to 2006. Households today have significantly higher rates of condominium ownership than earlier generations when they were of comparable age. This tendency cannot continue indefinitely, but where the limits are is anyone's guess.

One factor that may ultimately curb the growth of condominiums is the desire of aging households to remain in their current homes. The rates at which different age groups move have changed little in a decade and a half. In 2006, about a fifth of seniors had moved in the previous five years, very slightly below the comparable percentage in 1991 (see Table 7). Other age groups show similar stability. The fact that 80% of seniors do not move in any given five-year period suggests that they remain strongly attached to their homes.

The increased availability and popularity of condominiums therefore do not seem to have altered the rate at which aging households move out of family homes. When they do move, however, older Canadians are more likely now than in the past to choose a condominium. In 2006, 19.8% of household maintainers aged 65 or more who lived in CMAs and had moved in the past year bought and occupied a condominium, up from 14.5% in 1996. This rise was accompanied by a decline in the percentage of senior movers choosing to rent—from 69.1% in 1996 to 61.1% in 2006.[18]

Table 7 Mobility by Age Group, Canada, 1991-2006

	% of population moving in previous 5 years			
Age group	**1991**	**1996**	**2001**	**2006**
15-19	40.0	38.0	36.7	36.3
20-24	60.2	56.8	55.5	53.4
25-29	76.9	75.4	75.0	73.2
30-34	67.2	67.0	68.5	69.7
35-39	53.3	51.9	53.4	55.8
40-44	42.7	41.2	41.5	42.4
45-49	35.1	34.0	33.8	33.5
50-54	30.1	29.2	28.9	28.7
55-59	26.9	26.6	26.1	25.9
60-64	25.4	24.2	23.8	24.0
65-69	23.9	21.9	21.1	22.0
70-74	21.9	19.7	18.7	19.2
75+	20.9	19.1	18.0	19.5
65+	**22.2**	**20.2**	**19.2**	**20.1**

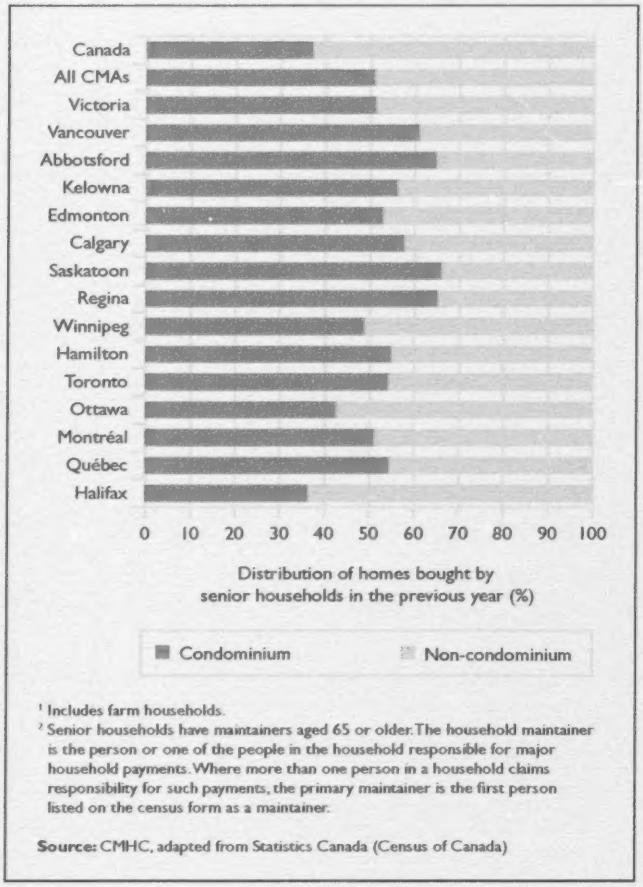
The Census collects information on the mobility of people living in private dwellings. Mobility estimates do not include individuals who moved from a private home to a collective dwelling, such as a nursing home or some other type of institution.

Source: CMHC adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

In many CMAs, condominiums account for more than half of the homes bought by senior households (see Figure 10). In CMAs collectively, 51.0% of the homes bought by senior maintainers who moved in the twelve months ending on May 16, 2006 were condominiums, up from 46.9% for the comparable 12-month span in 1996.[19]

[18] Data describe the tenure on Census Day (May 16, 2006) of maintainers who had moved in the previous year. Renters are generally much more likely to move than owners, presumably because owners have both a greater attachment to their homes and face higher costs, such as legal and real estate fees and taxes, when they move. Census data do not permit identifying the tenure of households prior to moving; however, based on previous research by CMHC on residential mobility, the majority of the senior households living in rental housing after moving likely came from other rentals. In 2002, 68% of senior maintainers in Canada who had moved in the previous six years and who rented their homes also rented their previous homes (data exclude seniors who were not maintainers of their previous dwellings—see CMHC, *Aging, Residential Mobility and Housing Choices*, p. 14).

[19] Data describe maintainers aged 65 or more who bought and moved to homes in the year prior to the 1996 and 2006 Census Days (May 14, 1996 and May 16, 2006).



[1] Includes farm households.
[2] Senior households have maintainers aged 65 or older. The household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments. Where more than one person in a household claims responsibility for such payments, the primary maintainer is the first person listed on the census form as a maintainer.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Figure 10 Distribution of Condominium and Non-condominium[1] Purchases, Senior Households[2], Selected CMAs, 2005-2006

SUMMARY

Including rented units, there were more than one million condominiums in Canada in 2006, out of a total occupied housing stock of about 12.4 million units. From 1981 to 2006, the number of owner-occupied condominiums in Canada grew more than five-fold, reaching 916,000. Among Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), the condominium share of the home ownership market in 2006 was highest in Vancouver (31.0%), followed by Abbotsford, Kelowna, Victoria, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Ottawa.

Relatively high concentrations of condominiums were also present in some smaller communities, including retirement destinations and resort locations.

Seniors and people under the age of 35 account for a disproportionate share of condominium owners, as do people who live alone. In 2006, Canadians of all ages were more likely to own condominiums than people of comparable age a decade before. The increased popularity of condominiums at all ages accounted for more than three-quarters of condominium growth from 1996 to 2006, demographic factors (including the aging of the population) for less than a quarter.

Part of the appeal of condominiums lies in ease of upkeep and proximity to services and facilities, qualities that are especially attractive to aging households. As seniors age, health considerations are frequently a reason for moving. Condominiums are a logical choice for those looking to downsize or reduce maintenance burdens. Health and maintenance considerations are likely behind the high percentage of senior condominium owners who choose apartments over other structure types.

Affordability is also part of the appeal of condominiums. In 2006, the estimated selling prices of condominiums were less than that of other owner-occupied units in every CMA. The difference in median prices exceeded $100,000 in Toronto, Ottawa, Calgary, Kelowna, Abbotsford, Vancouver, and Victoria. In many centres, the monthly shelter costs of condominium buyers were hundreds of dollars less than for other home buyers, savings that would be attractive to young people and other prospective buyers who don't want or need the floor space and other amenities of traditional family homes.

With baby boomers just now beginning to turn 65, there is reason to believe that the condominium market will continue to grow. If baby boomers behave as earlier generations did, we can expect that many will buy condominiums as they age. That said, however, the increasing availability and acceptance of condominiums has not had any obvious effect on the rate at which seniors move, a testament to the attachment of many to their family homes.

Appendix Table 1 Condominium and Non-condominium Ownership Rates[1] by Age of Primary Household Maintainer[2], Canada, 1996-2006 (%)

	Total ownership rates			Condominium ownership rates			Non-condominium ownership rates		
	1996	2001	2006	1996	2001	2006	1996	2001	2006
All ages	63.6	65.8	68.4	4.8	5.8	7.4	58.8	60.0	61.1
15-19	9.2	12.0	19.1	1.0	1.6	3.0	8.3	10.4	16.1
20-24	14.7	16.3	21.3	2.0	2.3	4.8	12.7	14.0	16.5
25-29	34.8	36.7	41.9	3.8	4.3	7.3	31.0	32.4	34.6
30-34	53.2	54.2	58.8	4.2	5.0	7.4	49.1	49.2	51.4
35-39	63.3	64.3	66.5	3.8	4.6	6.3	59.5	59.7	60.2
40-44	69.2	69.8	71.7	3.8	4.6	5.6	65.4	65.2	66.0
45-49	73.1	73.3	74.5	4.2	4.9	5.7	68.9	68.4	68.8
50-54	75.1	75.8	76.5	4.8	5.7	6.4	70.4	70.1	70.1
55-59	76.3	76.8	77.8	5.3	6.2	7.3	71.0	70.6	70.5
60-64	76.2	77.1	77.5	5.6	6.7	8.1	70.6	70.4	69.4
65-69	74.6	76.2	77.0	6.3	7.5	8.7	68.3	68.7	68.3
70-74	71.5	74.2	75.1	7.4	8.6	9.9	64.1	65.6	65.2
75+	62.2	66.2	67.9	7.4	9.7	11.6	54.8	56.5	56.3

[1] Total, condominium, and non-condominium ownership rates respectively describe the percentage of households owning and occupying a home of any kind, the percentage owning and occupying a condominium, and the percentage owning and occupying a dwelling other than a condominium, including farms.

[2] The primary household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments such as the rent or mortgage. In households with more than one maintainer, the primary maintainer is the first person listed as a maintainer.

Source: CMHC, adapted from Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

Appendix Table 2 Characteristics of Owner-occupied Condominiums and Other Owner-occupied Dwellings[1], Canada and CMAs, 2006

	Canada		All CMAs	
	Owner-occupied condominiums	Other owner-occupied dwellings	Owner-occupied condominiums	Other owner-occupied dwellings
All households	**915,725**	**7,594,055**	**827,685**	**4,661,460**
Age of primary household maintainer[2]				
15-19	1,375	7,420	1,190	4,070
20-24	19,705	67,875	17,560	33,260
25-29	58,165	274,585	54,525	162,895
30-34	73,480	508,250	69,395	330,940
35-39	72,960	697,680	69,140	466,335
40-44	80,810	945,960	75,975	621,760
45-49	84,440	1,017,205	78,375	650,520
50-54	86,635	947,590	79,995	588,670
55-59	88,005	849,585	79,985	514,920
60-64	75,375	641,900	66,880	371,230
65-69	64,540	504,445	56,520	281,255
70-74	64,350	422,770	55,235	238,020
75+	145,880	708,800	122,895	397,585
Household type				
Couple without children	271,135	2,309,905	238,655	1,269,680
Couple with children	143,500	3,124,570	135,350	2,099,265
Lone-parent household	80,595	620,430	74,655	403,830
Multiple-family household	10,475	176,935	10,105	140,655
One-person household	378,625	1,211,500	340,245	653,535
Other non-family household[3]	31,400	150,720	28,665	94,495
Structure type				
Single-detached house	35,985	6,293,220	23,790	3,658,945
Apartment in a building with less than 5 storeys	284,190	223,660	253,880	181,985
Apartment in a building with 5 or more storeys	288,775	0	283,400	0
Apartment or flat in a detached duplex	12,700	323,140	11,305	268,035
Other single-attached house	1,030	17,830	700	8,025
Row house	250,535	188,640	223,945	169,115
Semi-detached or double house	36,925	416,035	28,440	342,550
Movable dwelling[4]	5,580	131,510	2,215	32,785
Household size and number of rooms				
Average household size	1.95	2.80	1.96	2.94
Average number of rooms	5.2	7.5	5.2	7.7

[1] Includes farm households.
[2] The primary household maintainer is the person or one of the people in the household responsible for major household payments such as the rent or mortgage. In households with more than one maintainer, the primary maintainer is the first person listed as a maintainer.
[3] Other non-family households comprise non-family households of two or more persons.
[4] Movable dwellings comprise mobile homes and other movable dwellings.

Source: Statistics Canada (Census of Canada)

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